



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/439,427	11/15/1999	WILLIAM P. APPS	RPC0491	1629
33171	7590	12/12/2005	EXAMINER	
KONSTANTINE J. DIAMOND 4010 E. 26TH STREET LOS ANGELES, CA 90023			CHEN, JOSE V	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3637	
DATE MAILED: 12/12/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/439,427

Applicant(s)

APPS ET AL.

Examiner

José V. Chen

Art Unit

3637

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 September 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 22-55 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 22-55 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Upon review, the following non-final action is taken. The claims were rejected based on the patents to Wyler et al And Anderson et al. Applicant responded to prior art references Wyler et al and Fingerson since the reference to Anderson et al was inadvertently not listed on the PTO-892 form.. Any inconvenience is regretted.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the limitations regarding scuffing must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner,

the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

The numbering of claims is not in accordance with 37 CFR 1.126 which requires the original numbering of the claims to be preserved throughout the prosecution. When claims are canceled, the remaining claims must not be renumbered. When new claims are presented, they must be numbered consecutively beginning with the number next following the highest numbered claims previously presented (whether entered or not).

Misnumbered claims 51-54 been renumbered 52-55.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36, 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Wyler et al. The patent to Wyler et al teaches structure as claimed including a pallet (10) having at least one deck member (either one of Wyler's reinforcing bars 32 or Wyler's deck 14 and reinforcing bars 32 taken together), the pallet prepared by a method comprising: providing the at least one deck member having a first surface and a second surface (Wyler's reinforcing bar 32 has a top surface 34 and a bottom surface) and mechanically scuffing at least one of the first

Art Unit: 3637

and second surfaces of the deck member to define a slip-resistant surface thereon (Wyler's top surface 34 of reinforcing bar 32 is an anti-skid surface 36 formed by roughening or knurling). The only possible distinction between Wyler and claim 36 is the limitation that at least one of the first and second surfaces of the deck member is mechanically scuffed to define a slip-resistant surface thereon. This limitation is not restricted to mechanically scuffing either the entire upper or lower surface of the deck member (e.g., Wyler's upper surface 20 of deck 14). Instead, this limitation requires only that any surface of a deck member of a pallet be mechanically scuffed to define a slip-resistant surface thereon. Since Wyler's top surface 34 of reinforcing bar 32 of pallet 10 is roughened or knurled to form an anti-skid surface 36. The method of making limitations do not affect the product itself (i.e., the claimed pallet) and therefore cannot impact patentability to the product. The claims include product-by-process claims. Even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 39-55 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wyler et al in view of Anderson et al. The patent to Wyler et al teaches structure substantially as claimed as discussed above including a pallet member, the only difference being that the structure is not of a single material. However, the patent to Anderson et al teaches the use of providing a single material pallet member that uses roughened surfaces to provide different coefficients of friction to be old. It would have been obvious and well within the level of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to modify the structure of Wyler et al to include the structure made of a single material, as taught by Anderson et al since such structures are conventional alternative structures used in the same intended purpose, thereby providing structure as claimed.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 01-03-05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The applicant has provided an affidavit filed under 37 CFR 1.132. The declaration under 37 CFR 1.132 filed 01/03/05 is insufficient to overcome the rejection of the claims based upon 35 USC 102b rejection under the patent to Wyler et al as set


Art Unit: 3637

forth in the last Office action because it fails to set forth facts that are germane to the rejection at issue, the showing is not commensurate in scope with the claims. Applicant in the declaration has made conclusions and assumptions that are based on opinion.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to José V. Chen whose telephone number is (571)272-6865. The examiner can normally be reached on m-f, m-th 5:30am-3:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on (571)272-6867. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


José V. Chen
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3637

Chen/jvc
12-05-05